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ABSTRACT

This resource manual focuses on the development and enhancement of student program planning teams in schools oriented to inclusive education of students with disabilities. First, the terms inclusion, integration, and mainstreaming are clarified. Then, the challenge of developing instructional and behavioral plans that allow students to learn together is emphasized, outlining the need for administrative support, shared ownership of all children, collaborative teams, year-round transition and program planning, access to consultation and technical support, staff development, and school and home collaboration. The manual defines a "team" as a set of interpersonal relationships structured to achieve established goals. Members of the student planning team are listed. Essential elements of effective teams are discussed, including positive interdependence, face-to-face interaction, individual accountability, development of collaborative skills, and group processing. Appendixes provide team activities, various team forms, a team member checklist, and a team self-evaluation checklist. (Contains 18 references.) (JDD)

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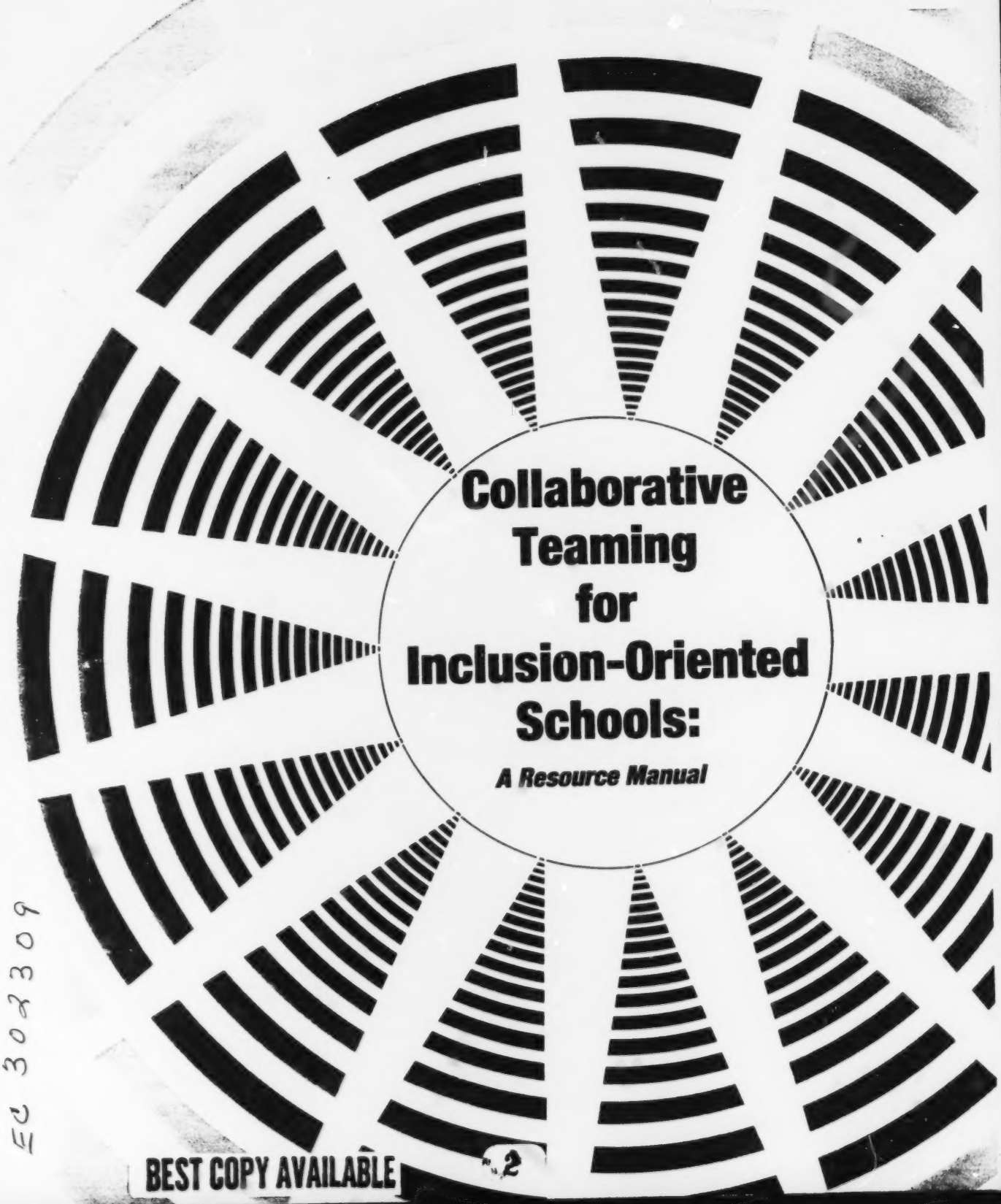

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Strategic Directions for Kansas Education

The Kansas State Board of Education is charged with the general supervision of public education and othe educational interests in the state. While clearly acknowledging the role and importance of local control, the Stat Board of Education has the responsibility to provide direction and leadership for the structuring of all stat educational institutions under its jurisdiction.

The beginning place for determining the mission for the Kansas State Board of Education is the assumption that al Kansas citizens must be involved in their own learning and the learning of others. It is the combined effort of family school, and community that makes possible the development of a high quality of life. It is the parent who is the firs "teacher" of children. As we grow older, we learn that the school, the workplace, and the community support ou lifelong learning and our training and retraining. The Board recognizes the responsibility it holds for Kansa educational systems and promoting quality education programs. The mission for Kansas education is:

To prepare each person with the living, learning, and working skills and values necessary for caring productive, and fulfilling participation in our evolving, global society.

We believe that the strategic directions for the structuring of Kansas education must be organized to:

- create learning communities
- develop and extend resources for parenting programs and early childhood education
- expand learner-outcome curriculum and learner-focused instruction
- provide inclusive learning environments
- strengthen involvement of business and industry in education
- provide quality staff and organizational development.

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COLLABORATIVE TEAMING FOR INCLUSION-ORIENTED SCHOOLS

A Resource Manual

Developed through the Facilitating Least Restrictive Environment
for Students with Deaf-Blindness: In School and Community Settings Project

December, 1992

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The manual, *Collaborative Teaming for Inclusion-Oriented Schools: An Introduction and Video Guide (1992)* and a video tape of the same name (1992) are also available. The manual may be obtained free-of-charge (as long as funds permit). The video may be borrowed and copied. Both may be obtained by referring to the contact information below.

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Preface

A SWAN, A PIKE, AND A LOBSTER

When friends sing in different keys
nothing comes of it
but trouble.

A swan, and a pike, and a lobster
set up in business
as pullers and haulers.
All three got hitched to a cart
and pulled like devils,
and the load
was right, and suitably light,
their muscles were strong —
but their work went wrong:
nothing moved.
Why ?

The swan sweated toward the sky,
the lobster hauled sideways,
the pike pulled for the sea.
No one was guilty, no one
worked harder, or better:
all worked well,
but never together.

And the cart's there still,
rotting in our Russian weather.

SOURCE UNKNOWN

Introduction

The name of nearly every school community could be substituted for "Russian" in the last line of this folktale. Administrators, teachers and parents are doing their best to meet the needs of students - but often they are working like the swan, the pike and the lobster - alone, not together. They are often members of teams or committees *designed* to work together, however very few adults have learned the skills necessary to be truly collaborative.

The very essence of collaborative teaming is bringing the diverse resources of schools together to "pull" in the same direction. The goal is to ensure that our students not end up like the cart - "rotting" in a school that cannot bring its resources and expertise together.

The processes and procedures for effective collaboration can, and have, been used in nearly every type of small group meeting that may occur in school.

Teams and team decision-making is mandated and also voluntarily used in a variety of ways in public schools and particularly in special education programs. Some common school-based teams are pre-assessment, staffing, Individual Education Program (IEP), teacher assistance, school improvement, and the list goes on.

Teams and the concept of "teamwork" is used in nearly every school. Few of these "teams" are more than quasi-teams; for effective teams are more than a collection of people around the same table. To be effective, members of any team must possess certain skills and teams must exhibit certain behaviors and attitudes.

The specific focus of this resource manual is the development and enhancement of student program planning teams in inclusion-oriented schools. However, many of the same procedures and skills can be used in any other setting in which collaboration between two or more people is desired.

Essential Elements of System Change Toward Inclusion

SOME DEFINITIONS

The words inclusion, integration, and mainstreaming are used in very different ways by different speakers and authors. It seems important to clarify intended meaning to avoid confusion.

Mainstreaming

Students attend regular classes when they are minimally competent to participate with little or no accommodation or support.

The following definitions can be applied to INCLUSION (neighborhood school) or INTEGRATION (not in the neighborhood school).

Physical Inclusion or Integration

Special education classes are moved from segregated facilities to be located in a regular education building.

Social Inclusion or Integration

Students with and without disabilities participate together in recess, lunch, music, art, physical education, field trips, assemblies, etc. for the purpose of promoting social interaction.

Inclusive Education

Students with and without disabilities attend age-appropriate classes together. Students may also participate together in community-based learning activities. Expected learning outcomes for students vary based on their own educational needs and goals. Teachers, parents, administrators and staff work together as a team to plan appropriate programs that support the learning and development of all students.

In a January 1991 Kansas State Board of Education policy clarification paper, Betty Weithers defines inclusion as " a philosophical and programmatic orientation toward placement in the least restrictive environment regardless of the student's categorical label." (p.1) This paper describes location as the difference between inclusion and integration. "An inclusive program maximize the interactions between those with disabilities and those without and *takes place in the student's neighborhood*

school. " An integrated program "maximize the interactions between those with disabilities and those without but *does* ***not*** *take place in the student's neighborhood school"* (p. 1).

It is important to note that inclusion is not just about placing a student with disabilities in a regular education classroom. Inclusive schools celebrate diversity and difference and see both as enriching the learning experience for all members of the school. In inclusive schools planning, support, adaptations, and enrichment are routinely provided for **all** students.

Inclusionary schools reflect a belief that all students belong in the school. The program planning and support teams for students with disabilities begin with an assumption in favor of regular class placement. The challenge is to develop instructional and behavioral plans that allow students to learn together. This is a continual process of planning, implementing, problem-solving, monitoring, and planning again.

1) Administrative Support

For system-wide inclusion to be successful or for inclusion for an individual child to be continued year-after-year, support by the superintendent, special education director, building principals, and other administrators is critical. The board of education must also be aware of the rationale, process, and benefits of full inclusion.

For quality inclusionary programs to develop, "support" by administrators must go beyond words and include action. Active support of changes in policy, financial support for staff development, modification to facilities and schedules, redistribution of staff, and time for team planning are only a few of the areas that need strong administrative support and action.

2) Shared Ownership of All Children

The development of a mission and vision for the school or district that addresses ALL students is a beginning. Making the mission and vision a way of life requires changes in attitude and behavior for both regular and special education staff. This is not just a matter of regular education teachers accepting and supporting students with IEPs . It also must involve a change on the part of special educators to look at the needs of all students in a given classroom when working with regular educators to plan for inclusion.

There must be an expectation that all staff will support all students.

3) Collaborative Teams

{Collaboration } is an INTERACTIVE PROCESS that enables PEOPLE WITH DIVERSE EXPERTISE to generate CREATIVE SOLUTIONS to MUTUALLY DEFINED PROBLEMS. The outcome is enhanced, altered, and produces solutions

that are different from those that the individual team members would produce independently. (Idol, Paolucci-Whitcomb, & Nevin, 1986). The key players in a student's educational program must have a vehicle for planning, monitoring, evaluating, and problem-solving.

Time for student planning teams to meet for on-going monitoring and time for teachers and staff to meet to do the day-to-day planning is a necessity for quality inclusionary programs to develop.

4) Year-Round Transition and Program Planning

Student Planning Teams perform two major functions.

a) TRANSITION PLANNING

planning for the movement of students from year to year

{such as early childhood to kindergarten, elementary to middle school, middle school to high school, high school to adult living, one grade to the next, and one school to another}

This planning typically should begin no later than the spring for the following school year. The next grade teacher(s) must begin to be included as part of the student planning team. Teams should leave school in May or June with a plan in place for school to begin in the fall.

b) MAINTENANCE & SUPPORT

maintaining program quality throughout the school year

{providing on-going planning and support to school staff and parents to educate the student in an inclusive program in the neighborhood school and local community}

There are a number of planning tools available in the current literature to assist teams in adapting curriculum and instruction planning for quality inclusionary programs.

5) Access to Consultation and Technical Support

Special education teachers and support staff must be available to support students and teachers in neighborhood schools, regular classrooms, and local communities. This may mean that regional cooperative staff will have to relocate to other schools.

In addition, few schools or districts have staff members who can answer every challenge a team, teacher, or student presents. Districts and schools need to develop a network of supports including regional service centers, other school districts, colleges and universities, community agencies, and the state department of education.

6) Staff Development

Changes in professional roles and responsibilties, as well as increased expectations for adult collaboration, require training. Orientation, training, and follow-up activities should be planned for teachers, administrators, parents, support staff, board of education members, and students.

7) School and Home Collaboration

Parents and families are key members of a student's planning team. They know more about the student and are the only team members with long-term commitment and interest in the student's life. Facilitating the involvement of parents may mean holding meetings at jointly agreed-upon times, including them in training activities, or spending time one-on-one to develop a relationship built on trust with at least one team member. Parents should be seen as equal members of the team with unique information and perspectives to contribute.

Don't look for one recipe for integration ...
it doesn't exist ! Integration is a process. It looks different for each child ! (and it changes from year to year).

(Schaffner, et.al. ,1988, p.38)

In inclusion-oriented schools, students with individual education programs (IEP), by definition have some unique, individualized aspects of their educational day. In addition, when a student is fully integrated in a regular classroom setting, the unique characteristics of the particular teacher and classroom peers have an impact on the students educational program. In other words, the program of any given child would very likely change, in some respects, if the child moved from Teacher A's third grade classroom across the hall to Teacher B's third grade classroom. Collaborative teams, that include the critical members, are the most effective vehicle for planning to meet the individual needs of students, teachers, and families.

What is a Student Planning Team ?

Many inclusionary schools have found it necessary and beneficial to form a planning team for individual students with intensive needs. These students may or may not have individual educational plans. Some schools have used student planning teams to provide support for students in family crisis, students exhibiting social or behavior problems, or students returning from residential treatment for alcohol/drug abuse or pychiatric treatment.

For a student with an IEP, the student planning team may look very similar to the traditional IEP team. A major difference is that an IEP team typically meets once per year to write the IEP, while student planning teams provide the student and team members with on-going planning and support. Effective student planning teams meet on a regular basis, once a week to once a month. Their goals are to plan for the transition of the student from year to year and to maintain program quality throughout each year. They provide a vehicle for creative problem-solving, regular home-school communication, proactive rather than reactive planning, collaborative consultation, and program coordination.

Who is part of an individual student's planning team?

Thousand and Villa (1992, p. 77) suggest the following questions to guide the decision about who should be on a student's team:

1. Who has the expertise needed by the team to make the best decisions?
2. Who is affected by the decision?
3. Who has an interest in participating?

The following are individuals to consider as you develop student team membership. The core team would include the people most directly involved with the student. The expanded team includes members who may be called in, as needed, based on the specific topics included in the team meeting:

Core Team

Principal

Parent(s)

Classroom Teacher

Special Education Teacher

Others who may advise the core team:
(may also be a part of selected students' core teams depending on the needs of the students and the team)

Integration Consultant

Itinerant Teachers (art, music, library, P.E.)

School Counselor

School Psychologist

Paraprofessional

Related Services (O.T., P.T., Speech Pathologist, etc.)

School Nurse

Work-Study Coordinator

Social Worker

Mental Health Professional

Physician

Student Peer

Technical Assistance Consultants

(university, state department of education, etc.)

Others Designated by the Core Team

EFFECTIVE VS INEFFECTIVE TEAMS

Before you begin reading the next section think about your past experiences as a member of a team. Think about an **ineffective** team of which you have been a member - a team that you did not enjoy being part of and did not work well together.

List the characteristics that made the team ineffective.

Now, think about a really **effective** team, a team you enjoyed being a part of and that worked well together. What were the characteristics that made the team you are thinking about effective ?

As you read the next section try to identify which of the critical elements of collaborative teams were present in your effective team but lacking in your ineffective team.

A team is a set of
interpersonal relationships
structured to achieve
established goals.

In most adult teams the second factor is readily acheived. We typically know why the committee or team has been formed - we know its purpose or its goal. (Although each team member may have a slightly different interpretation of that goal.) We typically do a poor job with the first factor, that is, the interpersonal relationships. This leads to what the author calls the "parking lot effect". The parking lot effect is the most observable evidence of a lack of attention to interpersonal relationships in teams. It is measured by the amount of discussion, griping, and complaining that occurs in the teachers' lounge, hallways, and most often parking lots of our schools following a team meeting.

In collaborative teams, **"we" not "me"** dominates.

Collaborative teams have two goals:

1) to complete the task

AND

2) to maintain positive working relationships among team members.

In everything a collaborative team does these two goals should remain uppermost - **task AND relationships**. If a team accomplishes the task they were assigned to do but the experience left team members feeling unheard, dominated, overlooked, or confused - only one of the two goals was accomplished. And if the team never quite manages to get tasks completed but they enjoy one another and feel good about meeting together - they still have only accomplished one of the two goals.

In collaborative teams, team members:

a) work together to get the job done

b) share resources

c) support and assist one another

d) celebrate joint success and develop solutions to joint problems

In many schools where inclusion and collaborative planning are just beginning, teams struggle to achieve this sense of "we". It is part of our past practice to look to, and point fingers at, the special educators when things go wrong with "their kids". We also tend to look to them to develop and implement the solutions to problems. In a collaborative team, all members share the responsibility to bring problems and successes to the team. Developing shared ownership and responsibility for all students will not occur until teams collaborate effectively.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVE TEAMS

Johnson & Johnson (1987, 1991) and Thousand & Villa (1992) have identified and described the following "essential elements" of collaborative or cooperative teams. These elements have been identified by the authors in the literature on cooperative group learning and in field experiences in restructuring schools.

1. Positive interdependence: a mutual feeling that "we are all in this together"
2. Frequent opportunities for face-to-face interaction among all team members.
3. Methods of holding team members accountable for agreed-upon tasks and responsibilities.
4. Development of small group interpersonal skills that facilitate collaboration.
5. Group processing: regular discussion of the team's functioning and the setting of goals for improving the relationships and effectively completing tasks.

Note – The Thousand and Villa (1992) chapter includes numerous strategies to ensure that teams practice each of these five elements. Their work on adult collaborative teams to support full inclusion should be read by anyone working toward these goals.

1. POSITIVE INTERDEPENDENCE

Positive interdependence is the perception that one is linked with others in a way so that one cannot succeed unless they do (and vice versa), and that their work benefits you and your work benefits them. It is the belief that "we sink or swim together". Positive interdependence is the essence of small groups, organizations, families, communities, and societies. It promotes working together to maximize joint benefits, sharing resources, providing mutual support, and celebrating joint success. (Johnson & Johnson, 1987, p. 399).

One way to foster positive interdependence is to establish agreed-upon group goals, describing each individual's personal goals related to team membership, and to set ground rules for team behavior.

Team Activity 1 - Setting Ground Rules and Goals found in Appendix A (page 29) can be completed by teams to set the stage for positive interdependence. Setting ground rules helps team members know what is expected and what to expect from others on the team. Agreeing to the group goal allows team members to clarify the purpose of the team meetings and the outcome that is desired by all team members. Sharing individual goals acknowledges that each team members brings unique skills,

resources, needs, and concerns to the team. "As a final step in this process, team members must be encouraged to take a win-win position, to agree to both forward the group's goals and to ask for that which they need to achieve their own personal objectives, recognizing that at times personal and group goals may seem to be in conflict." (Thousand & Villa, 1992, p. 84)

2. FACE - TO - FACE INTERACTION

Collaborative teams cannot make decisions and plan quality programs "by memo". Team members need time to meet, exchange ideas, and take advantage of "two heads being better than one" in solving problems.

Some factors to consider in face-to-face interaction:

- A round table facilitates collaboration - a rectangular table makes it nearly impossible for all members to see one another.
- Arrange for privacy and comfort of team members.
- Team meetings should last no more than 45 - 60 minutes for effective collaboration and to avoid fatigue. Collaboration requires a high level of engagement and interaction that is not possible to sustain for long periods of time.
- Teams of no more than six to eight members can effectively collaborate. Larger teams make it difficult to allow ample "air time" for everyone and make consensus decision-making very difficult. Larger teams may be divided into a "core" team that meets regularly and an "extended" team that includes members who attend only for relevant agenda items. Representatives may also be elected to reduce team size. These representatives agree to meet with the group they represent following each team meeting. For example, one sixth grade teacher may represent a four-member teaching team on an individual student's planning team. This teacher would agree to meet with her teaching team prior to team meetings to review agenda items for their input and questions. Then following the team meeting the teacher meets again with her team to review the discussion and action items from the team meeting.

3. INDIVIDUAL ACCOUNTABILITY

Shared diversity is one of the more difficult concepts for members of student planning teams to internalize in the beginning stages of inclusion. Shared diversity means that the team members fit together like the pieces of a puzzle. Each member has unique contributions to make to the team and no one member must possess all of the skills, ability, and knowledge necessary for the task. For example, the special educator brings a set of specialized training, knowledge, and

skills to the team; the regular education teacher brings knowledge of the regular education curriculum, his/her own class schedule and routine, and his/her teaching style and methods, and the parent brings information about the child's history, what happend last night and over the weekend, and the family's hopes and fears. The acknowledgement of shared diversity allows team members to develop and share their unique talents and perspectives. Shared diversity is the very strength of a collaborative team - bringing together people of diverse backgrounds and perspectives.

Team members need to be held accountable to do their share of the work. To ensure that this occurs:

1. Assess how much effort each member is contributing to the group's effort. Review the "tasks delegated" at past team meetings.
2. Provide feedback to individual members and the team.
3. Help the team avoid redundant efforts by team members.
4. Make sure that every member is responsible and accountable for the final outcome. An inclusionary program cannot be the responsibility of the special educator alone. The team must see the successes and failures as group efforts and responsibilities.
5. Highlight and clarify responsibilities of each team member. Review group norms.

Team Meetings

Each time collaborative teams meet, an agenda is generated and group roles are assigned. Typically, items are placed on the agenda by the classroom teacher and parents first, with members contributing items as needed. Then times are set for each agenda item.

Group roles are rotated among team members at each meeting. The rotation of roles occurs because in collaborative teams, each team member takes on some of the job functions of the traditional single group leader. The power of this shared team leadership is that, when practiced, it creates positive interdependence among team members in sharing resources, roles, and tasks of the team. (Thousand & Villa, 1992).

Some Collaborative Group Roles Utilized to Facilitate Team Meetings

Encourager: encourages the participation of each team member. This person is responsible for allowing equal "air time" for all members. The encourager may

need to ask a question of a silent member or ask for public commitment by individual team members regarding a group decision.

Recorder: records the pertinent information and decisions made by the team. The recorder does not need to write every word spoken at a team meeting, but rather records action items and summarizes discussion. The recorder should review what is written at the end of each agenda item or at the end of the meeting to ensure that the team's intentions have been accurately recorded.

Timekeeper: watches the clock and makes sure time is used efficiently based on the agenda. The timekeeper should give early warning that time is running out on an item rather than abruptly call for the end of discussion. The timekeeper may need to suggest that the team redistribute their time allotted to particular items as needed.

Observer: attends to the use of collaborative skills by team members and engages the group in processing their effectiveness in achieving task and relationship goals. The observer may use a formal observation form or may lead a less formal discussion using questions like: How well did we perform our assigned roles? How well did we stay on task according to our agenda? Did everyone participate in the discussion? Did we give one another positive feedback during the discussion? Are we working toward our agreed-upon goals? Did we follow our established ground rules? Details of methods the observer may use follow in the section on "Group Processing."

Other roles may be "invented" as needed by the team such as:

Jargon Buster - calls attention to the use of jargon or acronyms by team members and asks for explanation or clarification.

Tracker - keeps team members from "bird walking" or going off on a tangent. Keeps the discussion focused on the topic.

Summarizer - summarizes the discussion and action on each agenda item before the group moves to the next item

Examples of team meeting agenda forms may be found in Appendix B (page 31). Additionally, Appendix C (page 33), contains a form to be used by individual team members if they wish to take notes about their responsibilities following the meeting.

4. COLLABORATIVE SKILLS

SKILLFUL GROUP MEMBERS ARE MADE — NOT BORN.

Unfortunately, few adults have recieved training in the use of effective interpersonal skills and these skills do not magically appear when we need them in a group setting. However, the skills can be learned, and with practice, can be mastered.

Some of the skills required by group members include:

TRUST BUILDING
COMMUNICATION SKILLS
DECISION-MAKING STRATEGIES
CREATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING
CONFLICT RESOLUTION
LEADERSHIP

The Johnson and Johnson (1992) book, Joining Together, contains excellent activities and readings on each of these skills. You will find the reference in the bibliography. Your teams may consider making a regular commitment to completing these activities and reading the chapters about each of these skills.

TRUST BUILDING

I am afraid to tell you who I am, because,
if I tell you who I am, you may not like who I am,
and it's all that I have.

John Powell

Trust is not something stable and unchanging that exists within a person. Trust exists in a relationship and constantly changes and varies. The actions of both people are important in establishing and maintaining trust in their relationship. (Johnson & Johnson, 1991).

A climate of trust or lack of trust is continually developing between team members based on their interactions in, and outside of, team meetings. For example, if a team has established a ground rule of confidentiality - what we say here, stays here; trust will be encouraged as team members abide by this ground rule, but trust may be seriously diminished if a team member shares information outside of the team.

The development and maintenance of trust is important to creating positive interdependence in any team. Whether or not trust is developed and maintained depends entirely on the day-to-day behavior of individual team members as they interact with one another.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

All cooperative interactions between and among people are contingent upon effective communication. Through communication, members of groups reach some understanding of one another, build trust, coordinate their actions, plan strategies for a goal accomplishment, agree upon a division of labor, and conduct all group activity - even exchange insults. (Johnson & Johnson, 1991, p. 173).

Effective team members need the ability to send and receive messages so that both the sender and the receiver understand. The following will help facilitate team communication:

1.) agreeing to ground rules,
2.) asking the encourager to help ensure that all team members ask for and receive clarification,
3.) discussions are summarized,
4.) all team members contribute and support the contributions of others, and
5.) team meeting minutes are shared with the core team members not present and the extended team.

DECISION-MAKING STRATEGIES

Consensus Decision-Making

The most effective teams are those which employ a consensual (ie. all members must agree) rather than a democratic (ie. the greatest number of votes wins) decision making process. To behave in a consensual fashion, however, requires the development of a great many small group social skills including trust, active listening, perspective taking, questioning for deeper understanding, and skills in giving and receiving criticism. (Johnson & Johnson, 1987). The mastery of these social skills does not occur overnight and requires practice and feedback.

One quick-to-learn method for establishing consensus in a group is "Fist-to-Five". Following discussion of a topic and when you are ready to gauge the group level of consensus you may call for "Fist-to-Five". Each team member must signal their level of agreement by holding up fingers in the following way:

5 fingers = I think this is the best idea I have ever heard. I will do anything and everything to make it work.

4 fingers = I think this is a good idea. I will do what is needed to make it work.

3 fingers = I think it is an okay idea. I will go along.

2 fingers = I do not think this is a good idea. I will not go along.

1 finger = I think this is a bad idea. I will not work to make it happen.

A fist = I think this is the worst idea I have ever heard. I will fight to keep it from happening or work against you.

Threes, fours, and fives indicate consensus.
Twos, ones, and fists should be asked to explain their position and concerns.
More discussion can then occur to address these concerns.

This strategy provides immediate and public display of each group members position on an issue and allows a forum for discussion.

CREATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING (CPS)

A fair idea put to use is better than a good idea left on the polishing wheel.
Alex F. Osborn

Student planning teams need to develop methods for addressing the challenges that arise in planning inclusive programs that meet the needs of students and staff. Teams will want to learn about specific methods of problem solving (Osborn, 1963; Parnes, 1981, 1985, 1988) and their specific applications to planning for inclusive education (Giangreco, et.al., in press).

See Appendix D (page 34) for an activity designed to help a team or school faculty organize questions and concerns into problem statements. The following provides an overview of one problem solving approach:

Step 1 - Mess Finding (something is wrong here - something needs to be done)
Step 2 - Fact Finding (gather information related to the mess - may get at potential causes)
Step 3 - Problem Finding (state the problem in positive terms - "In what ways might we .....?")
Step 4 - Idea Finding (brainstorm ideas for solutions - suspend judgment, the more ideas the better)
Step 5 - Solution Finding (find the most promising idea or combination of ideas - judge based on team-identified criteria)

Step 6 - Acceptance Finding - (develop an action plan to implement a solution)

Excellent resource materials to teach this process to adults and children are available from D.O.K. Publishers, Box 605, East Aurora, NY, 14052, 1 -800-458-7900. Also refer to the Giangreco chapter (in press).

Remember -

Today's best plan is only tomorrow's challenge for improvement.
Source unknown

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Conflicts of interest are nearly inevitable when adults work together to plan and implement new ideas. Planning for inclusive education programs will likely involve conflicts between members of the team. Effective teams learn to use conflict to learn, grow, and improve. Team members learn to separate problems from individuals; and argue about ideas and strategies, not people and personalities. Johnson and Johnson (1991) provide resources for team members to analyze their personal conflict strategies and learn how to promote more effective, win-win negotiations.

Although traditional teams strive to avoid conflict, successful collaborative teams "recognize controversy and conflict as opportunities to uncover divergent perspectives for the purpose of creating new and novel solutions. Individual team members' competence and confidence in handling conflicts increase as a function of a positive attitude toward and an appreciation for differences of opinion within the team." (Thousand and Villa, 1992, p. 90).

STAGES OF TEAM DEVELOPMENT

Johnson, et.al. (1984) have identifed four levels of social skills that team members use at various stages of group development. These are four stages that every team progresses through as they work together. Movement through the stages varies from team to team and the addition of new team members forces movement back to the initial stage.

1. **FORMING - initial trust building among team members in the establishment of a team**

2. **FUNCTIONING - communication and leadership skills that assist in the organization and management of team activities so that tasks are completed and relationships are maintained**

3. FORMULATING - skills needed to utilize creative problem solving and consensual decision-making strategies

4. FERMENTING - skills needed to manage controversey and conflict leading to revision and refinement of solutions

See Thousand & Villa (1992, pp. 91 - 94) for a skill checklist which may be used as an assessment tool to assist teams in targeting skills for discussion, training, and practice.

DEALING WITH PROBLEM BEHAVIORS AMONG TEAM MEMBERS

(fron.. Thousand & Villa, 1992, p. 94)

Few of us are ideal team members all of the time. As a rule, dysfunctional behaviors that occur infrequently or in isolated situations may be ignored. Humor may also be used to lightly call attention to the behavior (eg. "Rich, I guess you are really excited about this topic. Let's check in with other team members and find out what they think about it.") Finally, team members may call attention to alternate, desired behaviors (eg. Jackie frequently interrupts. During processing time, Sue notes how Phyllis and Joe's careful attention to others' statements allows them to elaborate upon ideas, resulting in even better ideas.)

However, when a team member's behavior becomes incessant and distracting to the group, direct confrontation should be initiated. Although confrontation can be uncomfortable for both the giver and receiver, it may be necessary. If it is believed that the individual who is going to receive the negative feedback will respond positively to the enforcement of the team ground rules, any team member may initiate the feedback process. If, however, it is believed that the individual will be embarrassed or angered, a supervisor or a team member who has a positive relationship with the person should offer the feedback in private.

Corey and Corey (1982) and Kemp (1970) prescribe a five-step procedure for confronting dysfunctional behavior:

1. Observe the members' and others' responses.
2. Try to understand why the member may be persisting in the behavior.
3. Describe to the member the behavior and its impact on the team, using non-judgmental langauge.
4. Establish some rules for minimizing future disruptions.
5. Turn the unfavorable behavior into a favorable one (eg. assign an aggressive person the role of "devil's advocate" for certain issues, have the "joker" open each meeting with a funny story, assign a dominating person the role of

encourager, have the person who often wanders off topic signal whenever anyone gets off track)

5. GROUP PROCESSING

Collaborative teams must do periodic assessments of how well the team is functioning and how the team can improve in the future. Feedback is required for team members to learn and master new interpersonal skills and to use them consistently. Team processing helps ensure that individuals will gain and use interpersonal and task skills and that teams will progress through the stages of team development. Although team members may resist "giving up the time" to focus on team assessment, without group processing most teams will not move beyond the first or second stage of development described in the previous section.

Several methods may be used to promote discussion regarding the team's behavior and skills.

A. Assign an observer.

Group processing may occur by assigning an observer to keep data on the behaviors of each team member. The observer may be a team member or an outside person.

1. The group decides which skills to practice (two - four behaviors such as contributing ideas, praising one another's ideas, summarizing, not interrupting).
2. The designated observer keeps track of the number of occurrences of each behavior.
3. Group members assess their own behavior by discussing how they think they did in performing the identified skills.
4. The observer reports the data and gives positive and corrective feedback.
5. Members compare the data and their own impressions.
6. Group provides recognition for progress.
7. Each member and the team publicly set goals for the next meeting.

See Appendix E (page 35) for a sample observer chart.

B. Self-assessment of team members behavior.

Team members may also complete a self-assessment such as this one from Fox & Williams (1991):

Team Member Checklist

____ I contributed my ideas.
____ I encouraged others to contribute their ideas.
____ I listened to and expressed support and acceptance of other's ideas.
____ I expressed my feelings.
____ I offered my personal and professional resources to support the team.
____ I asked for clarification and help when needed.
____ I helped the group keep working
____ I maintained a sense of humor.
____ I recorded group and individual tasks.
____ I enjoyed myself.

MY PERSONAL GOALS

_____

_____

_____

See Appendix F (page 36) for blank checklist.

C. Group sharing.
Group processing can occur by simply asking each team member to discuss what they did well and what individual team members did well during the meeting.

D. Audio- or videotaping.
Audio or videotaping allows individual team members or the entire team to view and analyze a team meeting to identify instances of desired behavior and to focus on areas for improvement.

Student Planning Teams are most effective if members have regularly scheduled meeting times, keep the meeting length to no more than 45 minutes to one hour, have an agenda, keep minutes of the meeting, complete tasks prior to the meeting, use collaborative skills, share collaborative roles (eg. encourager, timekeeper, recorder), and regularly process group effectiveness.

Team members can complete the assessment from Thousand and Villa, (1992, p.103-105) which assists teams in analyzing their own groups. See Appendix G (page 37). This quiz will help the reader to recognize that simply calling a group of people a "team" does not ensure that the group will function as a collaborative team. Thousand & Villa (1992) intend the quiz to "serve as both a review of the team building strategies...and a tool for assessing a team's "health" (p. 102). Teams should not attempt to practice all of the items on the quiz at one time, but rather identify a few items upon which to focus. Re-administer the quiz periodically so that the team can celebrate their accomplishments and agree to new items to ensure continued growth.

SUMMARY OF COLLABORATIVE TEAMS

A team is a set of interpersonal relationships structured to achieve established goals. Teams function as individual members interact. The productivity of teams is not a simple function of team members' technical competencies and task abilities. To be productive, team members must interact face-to-face, perceive strong positive interdependence, be individually accountable, employ their small-group skills, and process how effectively the group has been working. In addition, group members must ensure that the group is cohesive, that trust is built and maintained among group members, and that the group's norms enhance productivity. An effective group can be an extremely dynamic force and have strong psychological influence on its members - social support, self-esteem, and psychological health. (Johnson & Johnson, 1991).

Collaborative student planning teams are a foundation and a necessity in inclusionary schools. Staff, administrators, and parents must have methods to communicate openly and regularly for inclusive programs to successfully meet the needs of both adults and students.

Beginning with a description of the problem through "The Swan, the Pike, and the Lobster", the purpose of this manual was to provide school community members with information, resources, and strategies to encourage and enhance collaboration for planning inclusionary educational programs in the hope that fewer of our students will end up like the cart, -"rotting" in schools that cannot bring resources and expertise together in a collaborative effort.

Finally, the wish for all school communities and collaborative teams would be this one shared by Mary Lynn Riggs, a principal in an exemplary inclusive school community in Swanton, Vermont :

The courage to dream,

the stamina to make it come true,

and the wisdom to reflect.

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Appendix A

TEAM ACTIVITY 1
SETTING GROUND RULES AND GOALS

Team members should have time in advance of this activity to think about the ground rules, group goals, and individual goals.

At the time of the team meeting the following agenda could be used. You may also consider completing this activity during two or more sessions, identifying the team ground rules first and discussing group and individual goals at a second meeting.

2 minutes	1. Agree on roles (encourager, timekeeper, recorder) - these roles are previously described in this manual
3 minutes	2. Brainstorm potential ground rules for the team.
5 minutes	3. Agree on ground rules for your team.
3 minutes	4. Brainstorm goals for the group.
5 minutes	5. Agree on group goals.
3 minutes	6. Think about or individually list your individual goals as a team member.
10 minutes	7. Share individual goals.
5 minutes	8. Processing groups effectiveness- roles, task, relationships.

Appendix A : Activity Worksheet — Setting Ground Rules and Goals

TEAM GROUND RULES

What are the do's and don'ts of our team ?
What do we agree are the rules for behavior for members of this team?

TEAM GOALS

Why are we meeting ?
What is our focus ?
What do we want to accomplish?

MY INDIVIDUAL GOALS

What do I hope to accomplish as a member of this team ?
What can I offer to the team ?
How can I improve myself through this experience ?

[Adapted from Fox & Williams, 1991]

Appendix B: Team Meeting Agenda Form

_____ Team Members Attending:
Date

_____ _____ _____
_____ _____ _____
_____ _____ _____
Time _____ _____ _____

Who is absent? Who will update them on the meeting?

_____ _____
_____ _____
_____ _____
_____ _____

Roles	this meeting	next meeting
Encourager	_____	_____
Recorder	_____	_____
Timekeeper	_____	_____
Observer	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Agenda Item(s) **Time Limit**

Next Meeting Date_____ Time_____ Place_____

Tentative Agenda Items

Appendix B
Meeting Notes:

Agenda Item	Decision and/or Action to be taken	Person Responsible

Appendix C : Individual Note-taking Form

This form may be used by individual team members if they wish to take notes about their responsibilities following the meeting.

Personal Meeting Agenda and Notes Date_____

Agenda

Next Meeting Date_____ Time_____ Place_____
Agenda

What I am responsible for:

Appendix D

Team Activity
PROBLEM/CONCERN IDENTIFICATION

AFFINITY DIAGRAM
(by Phillips & Gering, 1991)

Purpose: to take an extensive yet unorganized amount of verbal information and organize it, consolidate it, and generate creative solutions to problems.

Steps:

1. Write a problem or question at the top of a flip chart.
2. Each person then writes questions or concerns about the problem on sticky-note pads. (NO TALKING)
3. When everyone has their questions ready, put them on the flip chart, one at a time, anywhere. No discussion, except for clarification.
4. Next, non-verbally you all begin moving the sticky notes into categories or clusters. Keep moving notes until there is consensus about where they belong. No discussion, except for clarification.
5. In a group, decide on a name for each cluster. Draw lines around the cluster and label it. Discussion may now occur.

Use these clusters of problems/concerns to begin to do focused problem solving.

Some topics or problems to use for this activity:

a. What concerns do you have about using collaborative teaming in our school?
b. What concerns do you have about developing an inclusionary program for a given student (fill in the name) next year?
c. What concerns do you have about moving toward full inclusion in our school/district?

The next step is to provide training in a creative problem solving process for your team so they can begin to develop solutions to the concerns raised in this activity.

Appendix E: Sample Observer Chart

Collaboration Skills	Team Member:	Team Member:	Team Member:	Team Member:	Team Member:

Adapted From: Thousand, J., and Villa, R. (1992)

Appendix F

Team Member Checklist

____ I contributed my ideas.

____ I encouraged others to contribute their ideas.

____ I listened to and expressed support and acceptance of other's ideas.

____ I expressed my feelings.

____ I offered my personal and professional resources to support the team.

____ I asked for clarification and help when needed.

____ I helped the group keep working

____ I maintained a sense of humor.

____ I recorded group and individual tasks.

____ I enjoyed myself.

MY PERSONAL GOALS

Source: Fox and Williams. (1991)

Appendix G

ARE WE REALLY A TEAM ?

Directions: Circle the points to the right of each item only if ALL group members answer "yes" to the item. Total the number of points circled. The maximum score is 100 points

	POINTS
1. We meet in a comfortable physical environment	2
2. We start our meetings on time	2
3. We arrange ourselves in a circle when we meet	2
4. The size of our group does not exceed 7 members	2
5. Out meetings are structured so that there is ample "air time" for all participants	2
6. Needed members:	
are invited (note: Needed members may change from week to week based upon the agenda items.)	2
attend.	2
arrive on time	2
stay until the end of the meeting	2
7. We have regularly scheduled meetings which are held at times and locations agreed upon in advance by the team	2
8. We do not stop the meeting to update tardy members. Updates occur at a break or following the meeting.	2
9. We have a communication system for:	
absent members	2
"need to know" people, not part of the team	2
10. We use a structured agenda format which prescribes that we:	
identify agenda items for the next meeting at the prior meeting.	2

Source: Thousand and Villa. (1992)

POINTS

set time limits for each agenda item 2

rotate roles 2

have public minutes 2

process group effectiveness regarding both task accomplishment and social performance. 2

review and modify agenda whenever necessary 2

11. We have publicly agreed to the group's overall goals. 2

12. We have publicly shared our individual professional "agenda"; that is we each stated what we need from the group to be able to work toward the group goals. 2

13. We coordinate our work to achieve our objectives (as represented by agenda items). 2

14. We have established group social norms (eg. no "put downs", all members participate) and confront one another on norm violations. 2

15. We have a "no scapegoating" norm. When things go wrong, it is not one person's fault, but everyone's job to make a new plan. 2

16. We explain the norms to new members. 2

17. We feel free to express our feelings (negative and positive) 2

18. We call attention to discussions which are off-task or stray from agenda items. 2

19. We openly discuss problems in social interactions. 2

20. We set time aside to process interactions and feelings. 2

21. We spend time developing a plan to improve interactions. 2

22. We have arranged for training to increase our small group skills (eg. giving and receiving criticism, perspective taking, creative problem solving, conflict resolution) 2

Source: Thousand and Villa. (1992)

POINTS

23. We view situations and solutions from various perspectives. 2

24. We discuss situations from the perspective of absent members. 2

25. We generate and explore multiple solutions before selecting a particular solution. 2

26. We consciously identify the decision-making process (eg. majority vote, consensus, unanimous decision) we will use for making a particular decision 2

27. We distribute leadership functions by rotating roles (eg. recorder, encourager, timekeeper) 2

28. We devote time at each meeting for positive comments. 2

29. We structure other group rewards and "celebrations" 2

30. We have identified ways for "creating" time for meetings. 2

31. We summarize the discussion of each topic before moving on to the next agenda item. 2

32. We distribute among ourselves the homework/action items. 2

33. We generally accomplish the tasks on our agenda 2

34. We have fun at our meetings. 2

35. We end on time. 2

Total possible points = 100

Our score = _____

Source: Thousand and Villa. (1992)